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Xerox Docket No. D/A3543  
Application No. 10/776,515

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus, comprising:

a first comparator that compares an edge continuity value of a current pixel of each line of pixels to edge continuity values of pixels within a first neighborhood of the current pixel, wherein the first neighborhood comprises at least 3 adjacent pixels to generate compare results; and

a blob identifier; and

an assigner that assigns a blob identification of a blob to the pixel based on the compare results to associate the pixel with the blob;

wherein the blob identifier includes a top-to-bottom module for analyzing each pixel in turn in raster scan order.

2. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, further comprising:

a gradient parameter generator that generates a gradient parameter value for the current pixel based on luminance and chroma values of a second neighborhood of the current pixel; and

a quantizer that quantizes the gradient parameter value to set an edge continuity value of the pixel.

3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein

the gradient parameter generator is a grayscale selector generator that includes

a second comparator that compares luminance values of pixels within the second neighborhood of the current pixel to output a maximum luminance value and a minimum luminance value of the second neighborhood,

Amend. 1